

Mainstreaming Gender in IDRC's MINGA Program Initiative: A Formative Evaluation

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Executive Summary

Since the creation of the MINGA PI in 1997, the MINGA team has been engaged in a process of discussion about the importance of gender and gender equity issues in the work of the PI. For the 2000-2004 programming cycle, the MINGA team has made a commitment to mainstream gender into its programming and MINGA-supported research. Nearly three years after initiating its mainstreaming initiative, the PI was interested to assess and document the team's experience to date, to identify gaps or obstacles in the mainstreaming process, and to make appropriate mid-course corrections in its strategy to ensure that the PI is well-placed to realize its mainstreaming objectives.

This evaluation is meant to be formative, and to contribute to an on-going process of learning within the PI. The evaluation has sought to track the evolution of the team's efforts to mainstream gender into MINGA's programming and MINGA-supported research with a focus on MINGA's three principal mainstreaming objectives: 1) enhancing MINGA in-house gender capacity and knowledge; 2) integrating gender dimensions into the MINGA-supported research; and 3) supporting partner's efforts to enhance gender capacity. The evaluation also provides recommendations for strengthening MINGA's mainstreaming approach based on lessons from the evaluation process.

The methodology for the evaluation began with a review of all MINGA program documents that relate to MINGA's gender mainstreaming strategy and activities to date. Proposals and appraisal documents were reviewed for all MINGA research projects and research support activities (RSAs) approved since 2000, to examine the extent and ways in which MINGA POs are assessing the gender dimensions of proposals received by MINGA, and working with partners to ensure that gender considerations are being integrated into MINGA-supported research (from the outset of the project). The trip reports of MINGA POs were reviewed for the period of 2000 to the present, to assess the extent to which POs are monitoring the progress of partners at the project level and engaging with project teams to strengthen the gender dimensions of their research activities. Interviews were organized with all MINGA POs to examine their individual efforts and experiences to mainstreaming gender into their work and the lessons they have learned along the way. Near the completion of the evaluation, a team meeting was organized to review the preliminary findings and to provide team members with the opportunity to clarify and elaborate on specific findings and to discuss strategies for moving forward with MINGA's mainstreaming initiative.

Key Findings and Lessons Learned

MINGA has approached mainstreaming in a very flexible, iterative and thoughtful way and has treated mainstreaming as a learning process in the PI and in their work with partners. Early in the mainstreaming process, the PI identified the need for gender-oriented capacity building for MINGA program staff. The PI organized a *Gender in Environment and Natural Resource Management Workshop* to strengthen team members' understanding of gender concepts and approaches and their relevance to NRM research supported by the PI. The workshop was found to be an extremely useful exercise by all MINGA program staff, and greatly enhanced the knowledge, capacity, and confidence of POs, especially those with less experience in gender and NRM issues. To encourage more systematic reflection on the gender dimensions of POs' work with partners, to encourage exchange of experience among MINGA team members, and to capture valued learning that could be fed back into the mainstreaming process, the MINGA team developed (and regularly implements) a *gender monitoring tool* within the PI. The monitoring tool has encouraged an internalization of the gender mainstreaming process within the PI and

within the work of individual POs and has been useful for documenting and monitoring the team's progress towards its mainstreaming objectives. POs have suggested that the tool could be strengthened by, among other things, reducing the frequency of the exercise (to match the rate at which POs derive new experiences and lessons from their work) and opening up the exercise to others within IDRC to broaden the range of experiences and ideas available to the team. While not part of MINGA's capacity building strategy, the PI also developed a contacts database to provide POs with access to information about gender expertise in LAC to enable POs to more effectively link partners with suitable regional resource people in gender and NRM. The database, however, has not been used by team members to date, largely because it does not provide POs with sufficient information about the contacts and so POs lack confidence in the contacts and are unable/unwilling to recommend them to partners. While MINGA's capacity building modalities have gone a long way towards enhancing POs' understanding of gender concepts and approaches, the capacity to put concepts and approaches into practice with partners remains weak among some POs. To address this weakness, MINGA POs feel they would benefit from creating spaces for learning from the practical experience of partners.

A key element of MINGA's gender mainstreaming strategy is to support partners to integrate relevant gender issues and approaches into their research throughout the project cycle. During project development, POs are expected to assess the gender dimensions of proposals submitted to the PI, however, because of time and capacity constraints POs are not currently assessing proposals in a systematic way. From this point forward, POs should be encouraged to assess proposals for four key elements: 1) the extent to which the project seeks to address gender issues relevant to the proposed research theme(s); 2) the proposed methodology for examining these issues in the project; 3) whether or not the project team has the necessary capacity to carry out the proposed gender analysis (e.g. is there social science capacity or gender expertise on the team); and 4) any recommendations made by the reviewers to strengthen the proposal, and MINGA's team leader needs to ensure that each of these elements is addressed in all appraisals prior to approval. To support partners' efforts to integrate gender into research, MINGA is working to link partners to material and human resources in gender and NRM. To date, MINGA's efforts have focused on improving partners' access to gender and NRM literature and gender analysis tools and methods, and linking projects to regional resource people with gender expertise. The team has identified the need for a compilation of gender and NRM tools and methods in the form of an annotated bibliography to assist POs efforts to link partners to suitable resources, which can also be made available on MINGA's website so that partners can access this information directly. It is also recommended that the PI modify its approach to linking partners to gender resource people. Rather than have POs endeavor to seek out and broker relationships between resource people and MINGA's partners, it may be more strategic and effective for the PI to create spaces for networking and exchange among researchers, projects, and institutions so that partners have an opportunity to learn about what others are doing in gender and NRM in LAC and to scout out resource people to provide mentorship and other kinds of support. The ability of POs to systematically monitor the progress of partners' efforts to integrate gender issues and analysis into their research is also limited by time and capacity constraints. To support PO's in their monitoring activities, the MINGA team might consider developing a small set of monitoring questions or guidelines. Where feasible, it is also suggested that POs look for opportunities to link projects together at the country or sub-regional level for project-to-project monitoring to ensure more effective and meaningful monitoring at the project level.

To help to ensure that partners have the knowledge and skills needed to integrate gender considerations into their research, MINGA has supported a diverse set of training opportunities for MINGA partners through its Training and Exchange Program, and its Gender Research and Training Program established as part of its mainstreaming strategy. While these programs have

made needed training resources available to partners, in some cases, this support has been underutilized by partners for reasons yet unknown to the PI. In addition to these programs, MINGA developed a program to support opportunities for Masters students in Latin America to undertake interdisciplinary thesis research addressing the social and gender dimensions of NRM. This is an innovative approach that looks to contribute to the formation of NRM professionals with a solid understanding of the social and gender dimensions of NRM issues, and who are able to apply this understanding to their research and encourage greater awareness of and attention to gender in NRM institutions in LAC. To respond to partners needs for gender and NRM literature and case study materials, MINGA is also supporting the documentation of field experiences involving the incorporation of gender sensitive and culturally appropriate approaches, tools and methods from different countries in LAC. The experiences will become part of an internet portal focused on gender and NRM in LAC and is expected to become a key resource and point of contact for gender and NRM in the region. The PI's capacity building efforts will make a meaningful contribution to strengthening the gender analysis capacity of practitioners and institutions in gender and NRM research in the region.

Key Recommendations

Through MINGA's mainstreaming activities, the PI has gained considerable insight into the mainstreaming process. Drawing on this insight, the evaluation offers a number of recommendations, in addition to those already discussed above, to strengthen the PI's mainstreaming strategy and approach. First, given the time, capacity and resource constraints within the PI, MINGA needs to think more pragmatically about what the PI and individual POs can achieve at the project level. While, in the long-term, the PI will certainly want to ensure that all MINGA-supported projects integrate gender considerations into their work, this need not be an immediate goal or expectation of MINGA's mainstreaming strategy. Instead of prioritizing coverage (getting some level of gender analysis into all projects), it may be more effective to invest MINGA's time and resources more strategically. At the project level, MINGA could, for example, target its support to the development of regional case studies for the integration of gender analysis into NRM research (to illustrate the process of integrating gender analysis at the field level, to illustrate best practices, and to document lessons learned) and to the development, testing, evaluation and documentation of culturally appropriate research methods for gender analysis in NRM research in LAC.

MINGA's experience to date suggests that support for gender sensitive research at the project level may not be influencing the policies and programming of institutions as expected. MINGA should consider developing a strategy to assess the readiness of institutions to mainstream gender and to identify entry points to support this process within partner institutions. As part of this strategy, MINGA also needs to assess the needs of regional partners. A needs assessment would provide the team with critical information about the capacity needs of key partner institutions to implement interdisciplinary gender-sensitive research and to mainstream gender at the institutional level.

At this stage of the mainstreaming process, it is critical that the MINGA team define and systematically implement an appropriate monitoring strategy to ensure that the PI remains in touch with partners capacity building and resource needs throughout the project cycle, and has the information needed to assess the outcomes of its support, evaluate different approaches (what works, what hasn't, and why), and to document lessons learned (and use these lessons to more effectively target its support vis-à-vis specific partners and more generally with in the region).

As MINGA continues to move forward in its initiative to mainstream gender into the research and the institutions it supports, the PI is strongly encouraged to look for opportunities to devolve

responsibility for mainstreaming activities to the region. MINGA is likely to find that LAC institutions and personnel may be better placed (than MINGA program staff) to implement and manage some mainstreaming activities. Linking partners more effectively to existing gender and NRM initiatives in the region may also go a long way towards devolving at least some mainstreaming responsibilities to MINGA's partners in the region and may lighten the monitoring responsibilities of MINGA POs.

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Mainstreaming Gender in IDRC's MINGA Program Initiative: A Formative Evaluation

1. Introduction

The MINGA (Alternatives to Natural Resource Management in Latin America and the Caribbean) Program Initiative (PI) recognizes the importance of gender and gender equity issues to the sustainable management of natural resources in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and, since 2000, has made a commitment to mainstream gender into MINGA's programming and MINGA-supported research. Nearly three years after initiating its mainstreaming initiative, MINGA is interested to assess and document the team's experience to date, to identify gaps or obstacles in the mainstreaming process, and to make appropriate mid-course corrections in its strategy to ensure that the PI achieves its mainstreaming objectives.

This evaluation is meant to be formative, and to contribute to an on-going process of learning within the PI. The evaluation focuses on MINGA's mainstreaming activities and outcomes at the program level. In the near future, the PI expects to implement a second evaluation exercise to examine the experiences of MINGA's partners in their efforts to mainstream gender at the project and institutional levels and the outcomes of MINGA's mainstreaming support to date.

The specific objectives of this evaluation were to:

1. Revise MINGA's evaluation framework in consultation with the MINGA team;
2. Track the evolution of the team's efforts to mainstream gender into MINGA's programming and MINGA-supported research;
3. Provide recommendations for strengthening MINGA's mainstreaming approach based on lessons learned from the evaluation process; and
4. Provide recommendations on appropriate objectives and timing for an evaluation of the impact of the PI's gender mainstreaming efforts on MINGA-supported research and partner institutions.

This report provides an overview and analysis of the key findings of the evaluation. The next section provides an overview of the process by which the MINGA team developed its gender mainstreaming strategy and approach within the PI. Section three outlines the methodology used to design and implement the evaluation exercise. Sections four through seven explore the key findings of the evaluation in relation to MINGA's three principal mainstreaming objectives. Section four reviews the approach taken by MINGA to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of program staff in gender concepts, approaches and analysis. The extent and ways in which the team is working to ensure that gender considerations are effectively integrated into each stage of IDRC's project cycle is explored in Section five. Section six examines MINGA's strategy and activities to support the capacity building of partners in LAC. Section seven offers several recommendations, based on lessons learned in the PI, to strengthen MINGA's mainstreaming approach and ensure that MINGA is well-positioned to realize its mainstreaming objectives at the program level and in the LAC region.

2. Background: Evolution of MINGA's Gender Mainstreaming Strategy

Since the creation of the MINGA PI in 1997, the MINGA team has been engaged in a process of discussion about the importance of gender and gender equity issues in the work of the PI. For the 2000-2004 programming cycle, MINGA is working more systematically to mainstream gender at the program and project levels. In January 2000, the team hired a gender intern to support this dialogue and to work on gender-related research and support activities in the PI. In February 2000, MINGA used its strategic planning meeting to define its commitment to gender mainstreaming, and to initiate the development of a gender mainstreaming strategy for the PI. As preparation for this meeting, an assessment was undertaken to examine the team's existing capacity and willingness to integrate gender considerations into their work at the program and project levels (Wiens 2000a). At the meeting, the team drafted its vision statement, clarified gender concepts, discussed team members' individual comfort and willingness to encourage partners to integrate gender considerations into their work, and provided an opportunity for brainstorming strategies for gender mainstreaming (Wiens 200b). Since then, the team has dedicated a great deal of time and energy to refine and implement its gender mainstreaming strategy.

Mainstreaming Vision: Present and future generations of women and men have access to, use of, and control over natural resources they need to live fulfilling lives, and are empowered to manage them sustainably (MINGA 2001).

Mainstreaming Mission: Gender considerations will be integrated into all aspects of PI activities (gender mainstreaming). Partners will be encouraged to take up gender analysis in their research, as well as to integrate gender consideration into their projects and programs.

In order to contribute to the realization of MINGA's mission, the PI committed itself to:

1. Enhancing MINGA in-house gender capacity and knowledge;
2. Integrating gender dimensions into the MINGA-supported research;
3. Supporting partner's efforts to enhance gender capacity;
4. Supporting women researchers, women's organizations, activist networks, and groups working on gender and NRM issues; and
5. Supporting gender-focused research.

The PI is committed to each of these objectives; however, objectives one through three constitute the core operational strategies (and priorities) of MINGA's mainstreaming initiative to date.

Since 2001, the team has engaged in regular program level monitoring exercises to encourage team members to systematically reflect on their experiences with the mainstreaming process, to facilitate exchange within the team, and to capture learning and lessons that could be used to further strengthen MINGA's mainstreaming approach and activities.

In 2002, MINGA developed an evaluation framework to assess and document the experiences of program staff in relation to the PI's three principal mainstreaming objectives. This evaluation exercise, and the report that follows, attempts to address the key evaluation questions outlined in the framework.

3. Methodology¹

To review and document the evolution of MINGA's mainstreaming strategy at the program level and to identify ways of strengthening the PI's mainstreaming approach, the evaluation methodology included a review of program and project documentation, interviews with program staff, and a team meeting to review evaluation findings and discuss strategies for moving forward.

3.1 Document Review

The evaluation began with a review of MINGA program documents including MINGA's Program Prospectus for 2000-2004, reports from planning and other team meetings, and all program documentation related to MINGA's gender mainstreaming strategy and activities to date.

Proposals and appraisal documents were reviewed for all MINGA research projects and research support activities (RSAs) approved since 2000 (and fifteen projects covering the period of 1997-2000), to examine the extent and ways in which MINGA POs are assessing the gender dimensions of proposals received by MINGA, and working with partners to ensure that gender considerations are being integrated into MINGA-supported research (from the outset of the project) (see Appendix 4 for a list of projects reviewed). The trip reports of MINGA POs were reviewed for the period of 2000 to the present, to assess the extent to which POs are monitoring the progress of partners at the project level and engaging with project teams to strengthen the gender dimensions of their research activities.

3.2 Interviews with Program Staff

Interviews were organized with all MINGA team members during April 2003 (see Appendix 5 for a list of all team members interviewed). Interviews were designed to examine the key evaluation questions outlined in MINGA's evaluation framework, but were flexible in order to allow POs to discuss those issues they felt were most relevant to their work and experience. The interviews provided POs with an opportunity to share their experiences and insights related to the mainstreaming process at the program level and in relation to the projects and partners with whom individual POs work, and to offer recommendations (informed by their own experience and lessons learned) to strengthen MINGA's mainstreaming approach.

3.3 Team Meeting

MINGA organized a team meeting to review the preliminary findings of the evaluation. This activity provided team members with the opportunity to clarify and elaborate on specific findings and to discuss strategies for moving forward with MINGA's mainstreaming initiative.

The remainder of this report explores the findings from this evaluation exercise and provides recommendations for strengthening MINGA's mainstreaming activities and approach as the PI continues to move forward with its mainstreaming initiative.

4. Strengthening Capacity in Gender and Natural Resource Management in the MINGA PI

In the development of MINGA's mainstreaming strategy, the team recognized the need for gender training to ensure that team members have the necessary knowledge and capacity to encourage partners to consider the gender dimensions and implications of their work and support their efforts to integrate gender analysis into research. Over the past three years, MINGA has worked to create important spaces for reflection, exchange and learning within the PI as a means

¹ Additional discussion of the evaluation methodology is provided in Appendix 3.

to strengthen the capacity of program staff in gender and NRM issues and approaches. MINGA's strategy to raise the capacity of team members has included the following:

1. *Gender in Environment and Natural Resource Management Workshop*: intended to strengthen team members' understanding of gender concepts and approaches and their relevance to NRM research supported by the PI.
2. *Gender monitoring tool*: to encourage more systematic reflection on the gender dimensions of POs' work with partners, to encourage exchange of experience among MINGA team members, and to capture valued learning that could be fed back into the mainstreaming process.
3. *Gender contacts database*: while not part of MINGA's capacity building strategy for the program, the contacts database was intended to provide POs with access to information about gender expertise in LAC as a means to enable POs to more effectively link partners with suitable regional resource people in gender and NRM.

This section examines MINGA's experience with these modalities and explores the current capacity building needs of MINGA POs.

4.1 The Gender in Environment and Natural Resource Management Workshop

To begin to address the capacity building needs of the PI, MINGA implemented a workshop for the team and other ENRM program staff interested in gender and NRM issues and approaches. The Gender in Environment and Natural Resource Management Workshop held in March 2001 with the support of IDRC's Gender Unit, sought to: enhance participants' understanding of key theoretical approaches and key issues and debates to gender and NRM; introduce participants to different approaches to gender analysis and concepts thereof as they apply to NRM research; strengthen participants' understanding of the gender dimensions of their work; and enhance participants' ability to integrate gender into IDRC research projects and to support partners efforts accordingly.

The workshop was organized as a "learning experience" meant to provide an important space for critical reflection and discussion on gender and NRM in IDRC. Team members reported that the workshop was an extremely useful exercise to identify and discuss challenges to incorporating gender into their work, and to explore strategies that might better enable POs to encourage and support their partners' efforts to integrate gender considerations into research.

For POs with less experience in gender and NRM issues, the workshop had a striking influence on their work with partners. Prior to the workshop, one PO felt he was only "mildly sensitive" to gender issues; the workshop provided him with an understanding of gender concepts and approaches and the confidence to engage his partners in dialogue about the potential gender dimensions of their research. For POs with previous experience in gender issues and already working with partners in this area, the workshop strengthened their existing knowledge and skills while also introducing them to new and more advanced conceptual and methodological ideas. The workshop's emphasis on examining gender issues and approaches from both a theoretical and practical perspective (drawing on case study examples from active or planned MINGA work), also enabled MINGA team members, some for the first time, to make important connections between concepts and practice.

4.2 The Gender Monitoring Tool

In order to facilitate and capture learning in the context of MINGA's gender mainstreaming efforts the PI developed and implemented a monitoring tool. The purpose of the tool has been to 1) promote reflection among team members about the integration of gender into their projects, 2) facilitate the exchange of experiences among team members with regards to integrating gender into their work; and 3) capture learning about gender integration through team members' insights and experiences (Wiens 2001). The tool takes the form of a questionnaire administered to team members on a quarterly basis and taken up for discussion and learning at team meetings. Responses are collected and synthesized for presentation back to the team during team meetings, where issues are taken up for discussion and debate. The questionnaire asks a number of questions about the progress of POs in their efforts to mainstream gender into their work and, in turn, the progress of the team in meeting its gender mainstreaming commitment as articulated in the team's gender mainstreaming strategy plan. The questions address: 1) the integration of gender into the project cycle; 2) team support for gender capacity building among partners; 3) enhanced knowledge of 'on-the-ground' gender resources; and 4) the extent of exploration of 'new' gender activity and partners. The collection, synthesis and presentation of team experiences and insights provide an important opportunity for team reflection and also constitute an invaluable mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the mainstreaming process. At the time of this evaluation, the MINGA team has undertaken five "rounds" with the monitoring tool.

The monitoring tool has encouraged, first and foremost, an internalization of the gender mainstreaming process within the PI. POs reported that the tool provides a structure and a space to reflect on their projects, to analyze their own experiences and those of their partners, and to draw out and report insights and lessons learned to the team. For some POs the tool has also provided opportunities for learning from the experiences of other team members: "the different situations that POs encounter in their work with partners, how they responded to these situations, what they learned, and so on". Although POs were unable to provide specific examples of such learning (where, for example, a lesson learned by a fellow team member had caused a PO to rethink their approach with partners), most reported that access to this broader range of experience and insights has strengthened their overall capacity and confidence to work with their partners and their ability to link concepts to practice more generally.

The tool has also been useful for documenting and monitoring the team's progress towards its mainstreaming objectives. For the purposes of this evaluation, the monitoring reports have provided a diverse set of examples related to POs experiences with integrating gender into the project cycle, their efforts to support capacity building of partners, and their efforts to link partners to material and human resources in gender and NRM.

The questionnaire is also meant to explore the outcomes or impacts of MINGA's mainstreaming support at the project level. To date, this aspect of the questionnaire has received little input from POs.

While the tool, in its current form, has certainly enhanced the capacity and confidence of POs, several suggestions for strengthening its structure and approach were offered by team members. At this stage of the mainstreaming process, it was suggested that the team consider **shifting or narrowing the focus** of the questionnaire as a way to address issues of particular priority or issues thought to be overlooked to date (one PO was troubled by the lack of reporting on the impact or outcomes of MINGA's mainstreaming support at the project level and felt this could be the focus of the next phase of the questionnaire). While this approach might encourage more detailed reporting on mainstreaming issues prioritized by the team, its limited focus could undermine its usefulness as a monitoring and evaluation tool.

All POs shared the opinion that the **frequency** the monitoring exercise is too high given the small size of the team and the rate at which POs derive new experiences and insights from their work. The depth and breadth of reporting in the monitoring tool has consequently dwindled over time, as POs do not always have new issues and experiences to report since the circulation of the previous questionnaire. Reducing the frequency of the rounds – to perhaps twice per year – would provide an opportunity for POs to accumulate new insights from their work with partners and to report these to the team.

MINGA might also consider drawing POs from other programs into this process. In many ways, this exercise could be viewed as a **developing community of practice**, which could be strengthened by opening it up to others in IDRC (colleagues from other PIs and the Centre's Gender Unit). Expanding the range of experience brought to the monitoring exercise (or community of practice) would greatly enrich the mainstreaming efforts of MINGA and other PIs, and could become a potentially invaluable modality for stimulating cross-PI reflection and discussion related to how to effectively mainstream gender in IDRC.

It has also been suggested that the second aspect of this methodology – that of presenting the questionnaire results to the team to promote discussion and learning– might be organized in a more effective way. To date, emphasis has been placed on presenting detailed findings back to the team with little time left for discussion and debate. These **meetings could be more dynamic, interactive and productive** if, instead of presenting the results of the questionnaires (which team members could read prior to the meeting) a facilitator takes the experiences of the team and poses specific thought-provoking questions to the group for discussion. Generating real discussion that builds upon the experiences of team members is more likely to stimulate the group and encourage new ideas. Moreover, organizing these discussions during team meetings, while efficient, may not be the most effective way to stimulate learning. During team meetings, gender mainstreaming is one of many issues on the agenda and in the minds of team members. A lunchtime gathering, for example, would provide the space for more meaningful and focused discussion.

4.3 The Gender Contacts Database

In addition to these capacity building modalities, MINGA established a database of gender expertise known to IDRC in LAC to enhance POs' awareness of such expertise and to enable POs to more effectively link their partners with needed resource people. Many of the contacts in the database were identified by MINGA's team leader during travel in Latin America to scout gender expertise in the region. Other POs have similarly added gender contacts to the database as they are identified. Despite the availability of this resource to the team, to-date team members have not used the database to search for gender resource people to recommend to partners. The reasons for this are several.

First and foremost, POs have expressed that the database is not useful in its current form as it provides insufficient information about the contacts available and so POs are not able to assess their suitability for specific project needs. The database provides the name, institutional affiliation and position of the listed contacts, but **lacks important information** about their training, skills, area of specialization, work experience (e.g. a curriculum vitae) and availability. In addition to this information, it has been suggested that the database provide an independent appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the contacts. Without this important information with which to assess the suitability of resource people for specific projects, POs lack confidence in the contacts and are hesitant to recommend them to partners.

Rather than use a database, some POs prefer to work with project teams to identify suitable gender resource people for specific partner and project needs. In the Virtual Information Centre Phase I project, for example, the responsible PO opted to work with the partner organization to identify a local resource person to facilitate a capacity building workshop in gender and water management. The PO found that working through the professional networks of partners is more effective than consulting a database to look for local gender expertise.

The gender contacts database, in other cases, is not consulted because POs are not actively working to link partners with gender expertise for the purposes of capacity building or project mentoring.

Although most team members have not used the database thus far, most agree that having such a resource in the PI is useful (should the need arise), provided that it supplies the kinds of contact information required by POs.

4.4 Other Ways POs Learn about Gender and NRM

In addition to the specific mechanisms implemented by MINGA, POs have learned about gender issues and their relevance to NRM research in other ways. POs informally exchange experiences and knowledge with colleagues in other programs and some report learning a great deal through their interactions with IDRC's Gender Unit. One MINGA PO, for example, participated in a review of proposals submitted to the first round of the Gender Unit's competitive grants program in gender and NRM. The review process gave this PO the opportunity to review proposals for cutting edge research in gender and NRM, engage with other reviewers with gender expertise, and participate in a workshop where grant recipients presented and collectively analyzed the research proposals. Most MINGA POs have also participated in gender-oriented exercises (e.g. workshops) organized by other IDRC programs, by partners, and by other institutions in LAC elsewhere. Finally, through their work with partners, some POs are reportedly learning about the practical application and importance of gender analysis to NRM research on the ground.

4.5 Current Capacity Building Needs

The capacity building modalities discussed above have gone a long way towards enhancing POs' understanding of gender concepts and approaches, however most MINGA staff agree that the capacity to move from the general to the specific and to put concepts and approaches into practice with partners remains weak among most POs. Despite their expanded knowledge of gender and NRM issues, some POs feel they do not yet possess sufficient capacity to engage with partners in an effective way throughout the project cycle. It can take a great deal of analytical capacity in gender and NRM to, for example, analyze a partner's proposal and determine where gender analysis could strengthen the research, suggest research methods that could be used to explore relevant gender issues, and to monitor and provide mentorship to partners throughout the research process. This is frustrating to some POs who are committed to the principle of working with partners to integrate gender issues and approaches into their research but lack the experience, skills and confidence to put the principle into practice.

To bridge the gap between theory and practice, and to gain a richer understanding of where their partners are coming from, the MINGA PI would benefit from **creating new opportunities for learning from the practical experiences of their partners**. Most POs are already learning about gender and NRM issues through their (albeit limited) engagement with partners. Monitoring visits are certainly one of the greatest opportunities for such learning. While these opportunities may naturally present themselves during such trips, POs might be encouraged to create spaces for learning during their visits. Setting aside a specific block of time for POs and the research team

(and perhaps others interested in gender analysis in the partner institution) to exchange ideas and experiences would strengthen POs' understanding of what constitutes gender and gender analysis in a particular cultural and political context, how their partners are working to integrate gender issues and approaches into their research at the field level, and the kinds of obstacles (at various levels) that partners encounter in their efforts to integrate gender into this work.

POs would also benefit from opportunities to learn from partners at the field level (in some cases this is already taking place). POs should be encouraged to **organize field visits with partners** to gain a first-hand understanding of some of the possible gender dimensions of NRM research and how gender analysis is practically integrated into research projects. While this cannot be done with all projects and during all visits to LAC, planning for one such visit per year, for example, might be feasible.

Since monitoring visits to the region are limited (in frequency and duration) by the time constraints of MINGA POs, it has also been suggested that the PI look to create alternative spaces for learning between POs and partners. MINGA might consider, for example, **inviting partners to IDRC** (during a planned visit to Canada) where they could present their research and reflect on the process of integrating gender considerations into their work would encourage exchange and learning between POs and partners. These strategies would provide the spaces to learn more about where partners are coming from while making the abstract concepts of "gender" and "gender analysis" more relevant and comprehensible especially for POs with less experience in social and/or gender analysis.

5. Supporting Partners to Integrate Gender Considerations into Research Projects

A key element of MINGA's gender mainstreaming strategy is to encourage and enable partners to integrate relevant gender issues and approaches into their research. The MINGA team identified several steps in the project cycle where POs are expected to work with partners to ensure that projects are examining and addressing the gender dimensions and implications of their research. These include:

1. At the project development stage, an assessment of the gender and other social issues addressed in the proposal, the methodology used to examine these issues in the research project, the capacity of the research team to carry out the proposed gender analysis, and the provision of recommendations to strengthen the research proposal;
2. At the project development stage and during the research process, engaging partners in dialogue and supporting their efforts to integrate gender issues and approaches into their work;
3. Linking partners with local gender resources and resource people to support and mentor the project's efforts to integrate gender analysis into their research; and
4. Throughout the research process, monitoring the progress of the project to incorporate gender analysis into the research and reporting finding back to the MINGA team through trip reports and other monitoring exercises.

Each of these steps constitute entry points through which POs are able to engage and support partners to mainstream gender into their projects. This section examines the efforts of the MINGA team to incorporate these strategies into their work with partners, and offers some

suggestions for strengthening MINGA's approach to working with partners over the course of the project cycle.

5.1 Assessing Research Proposals

All proposals submitted to IDRC undergo a systematic appraisal process through which various aspects of the project proposal are assessed. The parameters of the project appraisal process include, among other things, an assessment of the research methodology, the social and/or gender considerations included in the proposal, the potential for development impact, and an assessment of the partner institution and personnel. All proposals are assessed by at least three reviewers from the PI (including the PO responsible for the project appraisal) who are responsible for reviewing the proposal, identifying its strengths and weaknesses and making recommendations to improve the proposed project. The responsible PO is then accountable to communicate these recommendations to the partner organization and work with the partner to incorporate those changes deemed necessary and feasible.

Overall, a comparison of Project Approval Documents (PADs) for MINGA projects approved before and after the initiation of the PI's mainstreaming strategy (in 2000) shows that the quality of proposal assessments with regard to gender have improved as a result of MINGA's mainstreaming efforts. According to MINGA team members, capacity building efforts within and outside of the PI have improved the way POs (especially those with little or no previous knowledge of gender issues) assess new projects. According to one PO, prior to MINGA's gender mainstreaming activities, assessing a project for its gender dimensions was an extremely difficult task. Today, with a greater sensitivity to, and understanding of, gender and NRM issues, this PO is better able to assess the gender dimensions of proposals and has the confidence needed to engage partners on these issues.

While all appraisals approved since 2000 included some level of discussion of the gender dimensions of proposals, **the majority of appraisals are not systematic or thorough** in this regard. A "systematic assessment" would include: 1) an appraisal of the extent to which the project seeks to address gender issues relevant to the proposed research theme(s); 2) the proposed methodology for examining these issues in the project; 3) whether or not the project team has the necessary capacity to carry out the proposed gender analysis (e.g. is there social science capacity or gender expertise on the team); and 4) any recommendations made by the reviewers to strengthen the proposal.

The majority of appraisals identify (with varying degrees of depth) the types of gender issues raised in the proposal. However, it is less common for MINGA appraisals to discuss the types of research methods outlined in the proposal and assess the strength of the methodology relation to the project's gender-oriented objectives. Only six of the sixteen research projects² supported by MINGA since 2000 include a discussion of the gender analysis methods or approach proposed (usually a list of methods referenced in the proposal) and only two of these assess the strength of the methodology and provide recommendations along these lines. In fact, many of the proposals approved by MINGA were found to have little or no discussion of how, that is through what methods or approach, they intend to examine gender issues in the project. This should have raised a clear "red flag" to PO's reviewing the proposal and should have been discussed with partners prior to project approval.

Seven of the sixteen research projects approved since 2000 made some reference to the capacity of the research team/partner to undertake gender analysis. Of these, the majority mention the

² This figure does not include RSAs supported by MINGA since 2000.

capacity and/or experience of the partner institution with gender issues in NRM research. What is surprising is that only one appraisal identified the partner's need for gender training to ensure that the project team could integrate gender analysis into their research. Given that weaknesses in capacity for social and gender analysis have been identified as a key bottleneck in the mainstreaming of gender in MINGA projects, an assessment of the capacities of the research team should be included in all MINGA appraisals. Without an understanding of the capacities of a partner, it is difficult to determine whether the team is able to carry out the activities proposed, and if they (and their research) would benefit from some type of capacity building support from MINGA. Should the capacity building needs of a partner go undiagnosed, the quality of the research and its outcomes may be compromised.

Overall, most appraisals are descriptive (in some cases text is “cut-and-pasted” from the proposal into the appraisal document) rather than analytical. As a result, very few project appraisals (two of the sixteen) offer recommendations to strengthen the conceptual or methodological approach of the proposed research or suggest the need for gender training by the project team. This leaves POs with little to offer partners in terms of mentorship and other kinds of support during project development.

According to most MINGA POs, **systematically assessing proposals for their gender dimensions is difficult** for three main reasons. First, time constraints limit the ability of POs to conduct a thorough assessment of the gender component of a proposed research project. To meet particular administrative deadlines in IDRC, POs are often encouraged to “get projects approved and get the money out the door”. This is often compounded by heavy workloads that limit the amount of time that POs can invest in the appraisal process. It is also important to note that POs are assessing proposals against various criteria (only one of which is gender) and each of these demands the same attention of the review team. This can place a great deal of pressure on POs who are committed to gender mainstreaming yet feel they lack the time necessary to address these issues in meaningful way at the project development stage.

Second, some POs also feel they lack the capacity necessary to properly assess the gender component of proposals. Particularly in cases where the gender component of a proposal is weak or absent, some POs have difficulty analyzing and identifying the specific gender issues that may be relevant to the proposed research, the types of research methods that could be used to examine these issues, and the extent to which the team would benefit from gender training.

Third, some POs are uncomfortable imposing MINGA's interests on partners. Integrating gender into a project's research design sometimes demands a rethinking and refocusing of the research question. Some POs have expressed discomfort with asking partners to shift their research focus to accommodate MINGA's interests and expectations.

To encourage a more systematic approach to assessing proposals for their gender dimensions, the PI needs to work to ensure that the review team for each proposal includes at least one person with sufficient gender and/or social science capacity to assess this aspect of the proposal. It is recommended that the **review team assess and report on the four appraisal elements mentioned above and MINGA's team leader should ensure that appraisals address each these elements prior to project approval.**

5.2 Encouraging Partners to Incorporate Gender Analysis into Research Projects

While POs work most intensively with partners during project development, MINGA's mainstreaming strategy expects (perhaps unrealistically) that POs are engaging with their partners throughout the project cycle to encourage the effective and meaningful integration of gender into

research. Although all MINGA POs were found to engage with their partners, each has a unique way of approaching and encouraging partners to consider the potential gender dimensions and implications based on their own experiences and lessons learned from others. This section outlines four overlapping strategies used by POs to engage with their partners to encourage the integration of gender analysis into MINGA-supported research. The strategies include:

1. **PO as Facilitator not Dictator:** recognizing the power relations that exist particularly between Northern donors and Southern partners and taking a participatory (rather than dictatorial) approach with partners vis-à-vis the integration of gender into projects.
2. **Making Gender a Part of the Problem:** rather than adding gender considerations onto to the existing research question, encouraging partners to rethink the definition of the problem they seek to address in a way that incorporates gender and other relevant social issues from the beginning.
3. **Gender Makes For Better Research and Outcomes:** encouraging partners to consider the gender dimensions and implications of their work by attempting to demonstrate that integrating gender analysis leads to better NRM research and more equitable and sustainable outcomes.
4. **Bringing in Those Who Know:** bringing resource people into projects to ensure that the design and implementation of projects are informed by relevant gender expertise.

All POs were found to incorporate one or more of these strategies into their work with partners. Each strategy will be discussed in turn.

PO as Facilitator not Dictator

Program Officers in MINGA are highly conscious of the power relations that exist between IDRC and its partners. A common criticism of IDRC, and most other Northern donors, is that “because it has money it thinks its ideas are the best” and uses these development dollars to impose its agenda on the developing world. MINGA POs are well aware that gender sensitization can take a great deal of time (usually well beyond the 2-3 year time frame of most projects) and that forcing gender issues “down the throats” of partners is not an effective way of generating interest in gender analysis. With this understanding, POs are committed to engaging partners in a more participatory way. POs see themselves as facilitators (rather than dictators) in the mainstreaming of gender at the project level. The role of the PO is to share ideas with partners and see how they percolate into the project and through the institution more generally. One MINGA PO, for example, approaches partners initially with a few resources in hand (e.g. MINGA’s web resources on gender and NRM) and then gives them the space to explore and learn the potential value of gender analysis to NRM research by experimenting with different concepts, tools and/or approaches in the context of their own work. The approach views gender mainstreaming as a longer-term process that promotes slow but steady “change from within” a community, project, or institution.

Making Gender a Part of the Problem

It is often the case that LAC research institutions view social issues as exogenous to NRM research. As such, gender analysis is frequently “added-on” to an already-defined research agenda and approach, and is compartmentalized and treated as a separate process. One MINGA PO uses the definition of the research problem as the entry point for discussing the potential relevance of gender analysis in the proposed research. Rather than add gender into their existing conceptual and methodological frameworks, this PO encourages partners to re-frame their research question

in a way that incorporates gender and other social considerations into one unified interdisciplinary research approach.

Gender Makes For Better Research and Outcomes

In their work with partners, some POs find that an effective way to encourage partners to integrate gender analysis into their research is to demonstrate, through example, that integrating gender issues and approaches into NRM research leads to better research projects and more equitable and sustainable management of natural resources, or on the other hand, that the neglect of gender issues has the potential to undermine NRM research goals. One PO endeavors to remind partners, using real cases to illustrate the point, that taking gender implications into account helps to ensure that research findings reflect reality more fully, and that recommendations and impacts are relevant. For partners who are leery of donors thought to be pushing a Northern political agenda, encouraging gender analysis from the point of view of producing better research and better management of natural resources is more acceptable and comprehensible.

To strengthen this approach, MINGA might consider collecting a small number of research examples where the inclusion of gender analysis was found to lead to better research and management of natural resources in Latin America and making these available to POs and to partners via MINGA's website.

Bringing in Those Who Know

Many MINGA-supported projects lack in-house expertise in gender issues, undermining the extent to which gender analysis is integrated into the research process. MINGA has identified that linking projects with gender resource people can be an effective strategy for ensuring that gender issues and analysis find their way into the design of research projects. In the Fondo Mink'a de Chorlavi small-grants project (100730), for example, the responsible PO collaborated with the regional partners to ensure that the small grants selection committee included members with gender expertise. With this expertise in place, the responsible PO could step back from the process, confident that gender was well integrated into the program.

5.3 Linking Partners to Local Gender Resources and Resource People

Linking partners to material and human resources in gender and NRM is another key component of MINGA's strategy to support partners efforts to integrate gender considerations into research. To-date, MINGA's efforts have focused on improving partners' access to gender and NRM literature, and gender analysis tools and methods, and linking partners to regional resource people with gender expertise.

MINGA's Gender and NRM Webpage

MINGA has invested a great deal of effort to provide access to gender and NRM resource materials on the PI's gender and NRM webpage. The webpage provides a broad range of information on gender and NRM, including MINGA program documents, project reports, and other gender and NRM publications as well as a number of very useful links to gender and NRM sites that provide, among other things, information related to gender and NRM research and institutions in the region, and outline culturally appropriate gender analysis tools for NRM research in LAC. Some team members reported using the webpage as an entry point for engaging partners in dialogue about gender and NRM issues and linking them to initial resources.

While the webpage provides a breadth of relevant information, it could be organized in a **more user/partner-friendly** way. MINGA might consider, for example, creating a direct link on

MINGA's homepage to information and resources relevant to partners and presenting this information in a more logical, systematic way. Specifically, it would be useful to categorize resources by their type (for example: tools and methods; institutions/programs; training opportunities etc.).

Tools and Methods

According to MINGA POs, partners clamor for culturally appropriate gender analysis tools and methods. While diverse kinds of tools and methods for gender analysis are available, most POs are not familiar with, nor do they have immediate access to these resources and most do not have the time to review and evaluate those that are readily available. One PO suggested that the team would benefit from the **compilation of an annotated bibliography of different tools and methods** available for gender and NRM research. The bibliography could provide an appraisal of each tool (including perhaps references to projects or other research activities where the tool has been used) and could categorize tools by criteria selected by the team (e.g. by type of tool, thematic research area, and so on). This would provide POs with comprehensive and quick access to a broad range of tools that they can then take to partners. Partners could also have direct access to the bibliography if it were made available on MINGA's gender and NRM webpage.

Resource People

MINGA POs indicate that linking partners to local resource people with expertise in gender and NRM can be a highly effective means of supporting partners in their efforts to integrate gender and other social issues into their research projects. POs favor this type of mechanism because it puts partners in direct contact with people possessing regional expertise and experience in gender and NRM research that typically far exceeds their own. Resource people with gender and broader social science expertise can contribute to the development and implementation of research projects by providing partners with locally-relevant gender and NRM materials (literature, tools etc.) and mentorship at key stages in the project cycle. This, in turn, allows POs to take a step back from the process with the confidence partners are receiving the support needed to ensure that gender is being integrated into research in a meaningful way.

Despite the great importance placed on this approach to supporting partners, few MINGA projects have benefited from contact with local resource people. The principle reason for this is that the MINGA team, and POs more specifically, lack sufficient knowledge of the kinds of expertise available in LAC and do not (for the most part) have the time during their visits to the region to scout out and nurture relationships with potential resource people. Moreover, POs are not well-placed to broker relationships between their projects and resource people in the region (given that they are based in offices in Ottawa and Uruguay – far from MINGA's benchmark areas – and, for the most part, are closely involved in gender and NRM activity in the region).

MINGA might consider re-examining its approach to identifying and linking resource people to their partners. Rather than have POs endeavor (somewhat unsuccessfully) to seek out and broker relationships between resource people and MINGA's partners, it may be more strategic and effective for the PI to **create spaces for networking and exchange among researchers, projects, and institutions both weak and strong in gender analysis** so that partners have an opportunity to learn about what others are doing in gender and NRM in LAC and to scout out resource people (either specialists in gender and NRM or other like-minded researchers struggling to integrate gender and/or social analysis into their work) to provide mentorship and other kinds of support during the project cycle.

5.4 Monitoring Progress in Gender Analysis at the Project Level

Monitoring the progress of partners' efforts to integrate gender issues and analysis into their research is, according to most POs, a significant challenge. With a few notable exceptions, POs make little or no reference in their trip reports to dialogue with partners related to the process of integrating gender analysis at the project level. There are two reasons for this. The first is that some POs are admittedly not talking to partners about the gender dimensions of the project during monitoring visits. The second is that, when POs are following-up with partners on this issue they are not documenting their findings and recommendations in their trip reports.

According to POs, monitoring the integration of gender into MINGA-supported research is difficult during trips to the region because POs are often visiting multiple projects (in more than one country and often for more than one PI) over a very short period of time and typically have a very demanding agenda defined by the most pressing concerns of both POs and partners (which may or may not include the gender dimensions of a project).

The capacity of POs has also been raised as a factor limiting the extent to which POs can effectively monitor projects. Project monitoring, not unlike the appraisal process, requires some analytical capacity on the part of the POs to assess the experiences and progress of the research team, to identify problems with the gender analysis component of the research, and to make suggestions for addressing these obstacles. Some POs in MINGA are not yet confident in their capacity to monitor this dimension of the research process and so do not integrate these issues into their monitoring visits as effectively as they would like.

Among projects that are more effectively monitored, POs are not adequately documenting the findings from the interactions with partners in their trip reports. According to some in MINGA, this is due, at least in part to the structure of the trip report, which is more outcome than process oriented. As such, POs report extensively on agreements reached, decisions made, obstacles overcome (and so on) and less on the process-based aspects of their visits. **MINGA POs should be strongly encouraged to document any and all dialogue related to gender mainstreaming that takes place with their partners during monitoring trips.** This will ensure that trip reports capture important information about the progress of partners in their efforts to integrate gender at the project level and provide a mechanism for valued exchange and learning among team members.

In conjunction with monitoring visits, POs are expected to monitor a project's progress by remaining up-to-date with the interim reports of the research team and communicating any questions or concerns back to partners (usually by email). Some POs indicate that they are often buried in reports and sometimes do not have the opportunity to review them as they are received (and do not get to them until sometimes months later). Without these and other important monitoring mechanisms, POs are often unaware of the extent and ways in which gender analysis is (or is not) being integrated into research on the ground and are not in a position to identify (or address) the emerging needs of partners.

The MINGA team might consider **developing a small set of monitoring questions or guidelines to assist POs** on monitoring visits, in their correspondence with project teams, and in other monitoring activities. POs should be collecting data on the gender issues found to be relevant to the project, how gender has been integrated into the project (through what methods and approaches), the successes, failures, and lessons learned in the project and so on. MINGA's monitoring tool (for monitoring mainstreaming at the program level) could be modified for such a purpose.

Where feasible, POs may also look for opportunities to link projects together at the country or sub-regional level for project-to-project monitoring. **Project-to-project monitoring has the potential to ensure more effective and meaningful monitoring at the project level** and also creates opportunities for peer learning in gender and NRM among MINGA partners.

In summary, while it is clear that MINGA POs are working to ensure that gender considerations are being integrated into MINGA-supported projects, the PI needs to develop a more systematic approach to gender mainstreaming at the project level and throughout the project cycle. This section has provided recommendations for strengthening the proposal appraisal and monitoring stages of the project cycle to ensure that gender is integrated into the work of POs in a more systematic way.

6. PI Support for Capacity Building in Gender Analysis Among Partners in LAC

To promote a better understanding of the relevance of gender to NRM research in LAC, and to ensure that partners have the requisite knowledge and skills to integrate gender considerations into their research, MINGA's mainstreaming strategy places considerable emphasis on strengthening the capacity of partners in social and gender analysis. MINGA's approach to capacity building is flexible and continues to evolve as the needs of partners are more clearly defined. Since 2000, MINGA has implemented three projects to build capacity in LAC which constitute a significant investment by MINGA – amounting to roughly ten percent of MINGA's budget for 2000/01 and thirty percent of MINGA's budget for 2001/02. These include:

1. Gender research and training support for MINGA partners;
2. Support to Masters thesis research on gender and NRM; and
3. Documenting research experiences in gender and NRM in Latin America.

These projects address key areas where capacity in gender and NRM was found to be weak among MINGA's partners and in the region more broadly. This section will review MINGA's experience with the three strategies and examine some of the lessons learned by the PI.

6.1 Gender Research and Training Support for MINGA Partners

In MINGA, a key modality for strengthening capacity is training, both to raise partners' awareness and understanding of gender and NRM issues and to enhance gender analysis skills. MINGA has supported training opportunities for MINGA partners through two programs: 1) MINGA's Training and Exchange Program, and 2) MINGA's Gender Research and Training Program.

Training and Exchange Program

MINGA has made efforts to support training in gender analysis through the PI's Training and Exchange program (050402) which, since 1998, has sought to strengthen the research capacity of institutions working in MINGA's benchmark areas by providing 1) access to appropriate, well-targeted training for staff of institutions working in benchmark areas, and 2) support to small, focused research activities by researchers and students on various aspects of sustainable and equitable NRM. Although the Training and Exchange program is not focused on gender-oriented capacity building, it has supported a number of activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of partners in gender analysis.

Gender and Stakeholder Analysis Workshop. In 1999, the Training and Exchange program supported a gender stakeholder analysis workshop in Cuba for several MINGA partners as well as researchers from other IDRC-supported projects in the region. The underlying rationale for the workshop was the perceived need (by POs and project researchers) to strengthen the gender dimensions of MINGA (and other IDRC) supported research projects. The workshop sought to provide a forum for dialogue and exchange about gender and NRM through which participants would gain a solid understanding of 1) the principles underlying gender and NRM work, and 2) the concepts used in discussing gender and NRM. Participants reportedly left the workshop with a better understanding of the meaning and relevance of gender to NRM research, and with this a greater willingness and interest to integrate gender analysis into their own research (Wiens 2000c).

Gender and NRM Training Award. As a follow-up to the gender and stakeholder analysis workshop, MINGA organized a competition to support further capacity building for individuals and/or institutions participating in projects supported by MINGA. The competition offered a maximum of \$10,000 per group to support: 1) sensitization of project teams in gender concepts and social analysis in the context of natural resource management; 2) specialized training in gender analysis for one of the team members, in those cases where sensitization of gender issues already exists in the project team; or 3) training through the development of case studies illustrating the application of a gender approach within on-going or recently concluded projects, with concrete support from a qualified resource person.

Despite having sent the call for proposals out to all of MINGA's partners participating in active projects supported by the PI, MINGA only received four proposals for funding consideration (all of which were funded by the program). The MINGA team cannot explain the poor response to this offer of support, and should consider **following-up with partners to determine why partners are not utilizing resources offered by the PI** (e.g. are partners disinterested; is MINGA support not addressing partners' immediate needs; are there factors impeding partners' ability to draw on MINGA support?). This information could be used to design capacity building activities that better target the needs and interests of different partners.

Other Gender Training Support. The Training and Exchange program also supported a training workshop on the theme of gender and water management for the MINGA-supported Virtual Information Centre project.

Gender Research and Training Program

In 2000, as part of its gender mainstreaming strategy, the MINGA PI developed a project (100841) to further promote the integration of gender analysis in NRM research in LAC. The project seeks to 1) increase the institutional and individual competence of MINGA's research partners to undertake gender analysis in natural resources management research, and their commitment to institutionalizing gender sensitive research; 2) encourage and enable potential new partner institutions to explore gender dimensions of NRM research; and, 3) improve access of the Latin American research community to knowledge and skills development opportunities in to gender and NRM.

To date, this program has supported a diverse set of activities intended to strengthen the capacity of individual researchers and institutions in gender and NRM. The fund has supported the Masters and PhD field research of two researchers working with MINGA projects in Chile and Colombia respectively. The program also supported two conferences on gender and NRM in Latin America. The first, a national women's conference to address the issues and concerns facing indigenous women in Guyana, which evolved out of the MINGA-supported "Exploring

Indigenous Perspectives on Consultation and Engagement within the Mining Sector of LAC” (100158) project. The second was a conference held in Costa Rica to provide a forum for exchange of experiences and learning with regards to promoting gender equity in rural development projects. The gender training program is also supporting the development and publication of an anthology of key texts on gender and NRM in Spanish, for dissemination among the Latin American NRM community. The latest activity under this project will enable the Centro Boliviano de Estudios Multidisciplinarios to retain the services of one or two gender specialists in another Bolivian research institution, the Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Economica y Social, to strengthen the gender analysis capacity of participants in an Internet based training program in community forestry management, a project currently receiving MINGA support (101383).

6.2 Support to Masters Thesis Research on Gender and NRM

In 2001, MINGA’s team leader and gender specialist organized an extensive visit across LAC in order to meet with partners and other institutions to assess the extent of gender and NRM activity in the region and to explore strategies for strengthening gender and NRM research capacity in the region. Among other things, their discussions revealed that a chronic lack of funding for education, and specifically thesis research, is severely undermining the extent to which Latin American students are able to complete their thesis research. Thesis research can be a crucial opportunity for students to explore different methodological approaches (such as social/gender analysis) in their subject area and to apply these approaches in the field (where the most valuable learning takes place). As it is this experience that often shapes a researcher’s professional career, MINGA’s contacts in LAC have expressed that this lack of funds for thesis research constitutes a near-crisis in the academic *‘formacion’* of young Latin American professionals (Trip Report, P.Wiens, Mar-Apr 2001) and a challenge to efforts to mainstream gender in the region.

To begin to address this challenge, MINGA developed a program to support the thesis research of Latin American students that integrates social and/or gender analysis into their examination of NRM issues. The program was also developed to address other, more broad and encompassing challenges facing the Latin American region with regards to promoting equitable and sustainable natural resource management through research for development. These include: 1) the persistent divorce of social and natural sciences, such that inter-disciplinary research addressing both social and biophysical dimensions of NRM issues is rare and difficult to accomplish; 2) the importance of adequately addressing equity dimensions of NRM issues, and 3) the marked divide between academic research and development practice, such that the potential benefit to development practice of informed research is not realized.

The overall objective of the program is to contribute to the formation of NRM professionals, women and men, in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, with a solid understanding of the social and gender dimensions of NRM issues, and who are able to apply this understanding to their research and work. Specifically, the program seeks to: 1) to provide opportunities and support to masters students and faculty researchers of graduate NRM and gender studies programs, to undertake inter-disciplinary thesis research addressing the social and gender dimensions of NRM; 2) to promote the bridging of the research/ development divide, by encouraging researchers and universities to develop linkages with development projects, and to undertake applied research that informs development processes; 3) to explore options, models and institutional frameworks to ensure the continuity of this initiative and 4) to strengthen the work of professionals in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, interested in interdisciplinary research addressing the relationship between gender and natural resources.

The focus of MINGA’s support is to encourage interdisciplinary gender-sensitive learning (rather than research outcomes) by the recipient students, between faculties (social and natural sciences)

and among participating academic institutions. Where possible, students are paired with advisors with social science and/or gender expertise to make certain that students are mentored through the research process. To ensure that this learning is shared, the program also intends to facilitate opportunities for networking among recipients and colleagues working in gender and NRM in the country and at the sub-regional level.

MINGA's program to support thesis research is a significant achievement in the PI's efforts to mainstream gender in NRM research in the LAC region in that it is enabling the development of young NRM professionals with an understanding of the gender dimensions of NRM and who have the practical skills and experience to carry out interdisciplinary gender-sensitive research. The experience gained is expected to contribute to the creation of a critical mass of researchers committed to and experienced in interdisciplinary gender-sensitive NRM research and to encourage greater awareness of and attention to gender in NRM institutions in LAC.

6.3 Documenting Research Experiences in Gender and NRM

Again and again, MINGA's partners throughout Latin America have expressed the need for better access to gender and NRM literature and case studies that illustrate how (that is the process through which) gender analysis is integrated into research at the field level. In 2001, MINGA approved a project by the IUCN³ to support the documentation of fifty field experiences involving the incorporation of gender sensitive and culturally appropriate approaches, tools and methods from different countries in LAC. The experiences will become part of an internet portal focused on gender and NRM in LAC which will also provide access to Spanish gender and NRM literature, tools, contacts and networks for regional debate and enquiry. It is expected, for example, that the results of masters-level research in gender and NRM supported by MINGA may be made available through the web portal. The project is also expected to create a learning community through which Latin American researchers may be able to exchange experiences and discuss issues related to gender and NRM.

While this project is not focused on capacity building per se, the web portal is expected to become a key resource and point of contact for gender and NRM in the region and, in so doing, will provide researchers and institutions with the kinds of resources needed to enhance their understanding of, and capacity to undertake, gender analysis is both theory and practice. Most importantly, these resources will be derived from Latin American experiences and perspectives on gender and NRM. MINGA's partners are certain to benefit from the kinds of resources the web portal will provide and efforts should be made to link interested partners to the learning network that will evolve out of the project.

In summary, MINGA's capacity building efforts will make a meaningful contribution to strengthening the gender analysis capacity of practitioners and institutions in gender and NRM research in the region. To further strengthen its capacity building strategy, the PI needs to follow-up with partners to determine why, in some cases, they are not drawing on the support offered by MINGA. Specifically, it would be useful to identify if there are project or institutional obstacles that undermine researchers efforts to seek training, or if the underutilization of these resources reflects a lack of interest or demand for this type of support.

7. Strengthening MINGA's Mainstreaming Strategy: Recommendations

³ International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

Mainstreaming gender into MINGA's programming has been (and continues to be) a learning process for the PI. MINGA's strategy continues to evolve over time in response to the needs and interests of the PI and its partners. At the program level, the PI is experimenting with innovative ways to encourage reflection, exchange and learning among team members to ensure that POs have the requisite knowledge and capacity to encourage partners to integrate gender analysis into their research. At the project level, the team is working with partners to integrate gender issues and approaches into MINGA-supported research. And, at the regional level, MINGA is making a substantial investment in strengthening the capacity of NRM researchers to understand the relevance of gender to NRM and to incorporate gender analysis into applied research. Through these initiatives, MINGA has gained considerable insight into the mainstreaming process. Drawing on this insight, the evaluation findings suggest a number of areas where the PI's strategy and approach could be strengthened. This section highlights these issues for future discussion and planning by the MINGA team and provides a matrix outlining how these recommendations may be implemented by the MINGA team in the short, medium and long-term.

7.1 Strengthening MINGA's Capacity Building Modalities in the PI

The Gender Monitoring Tool

MINGA's team offered four suggestions for strengthening the PI's Gender Monitoring Tool:

- i) shifting or narrowing the focus of the questionnaire as a way to address issues of particular priority or issues thought to be overlooked to date;
- ii) decreasing the frequency the monitoring exercise – to perhaps twice per year – would provide an opportunity for POs to accumulate new insights from their work with partners and to report these to the team;
- iii) drawing POs from other programs into the monitoring exercise (also seen as a community of practice) to expand the range of experience brought to the monitoring exercise and enrich the mainstreaming efforts of MINGA and other PIs;
- iv) encouraging more dynamic, interactive and productive dialogue during the team meeting component of the monitoring exercise. It is recommended that a facilitator take the experiences of the team and poses specific thought-provoking questions to the group for discussion. Moreover, organizing these discussions during formal team meetings, while efficient, may not be the most effective way to stimulate learning. During team meetings, gender mainstreaming is one of many issues on the agenda and in the minds of team members. A lunchtime gathering, for example, would provide the space for more meaningful and focused discussion.

The Gender Contacts Database

If the database continues to be a resource available to the MINGA team, the PI might consider including more detailed information about individual contacts including the name, institutional affiliation and position of the listed contacts, as well as information about their training, skills, area of specialization, work experience (e.g. a curriculum vitae) and availability. In addition to this information, it has been suggested that the database provide an independent appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the contacts. Alternatively, looking for opportunities to devolve responsibility for linking partners to resource people to the region may be a more appropriate and sustainable strategy.

Creating Spaces to Learn from Partners

To make the abstract concepts of “gender” and “gender analysis” more relevant and comprehensible to MINGA team members, and to gain a richer understanding of where their partners are coming from, the MINGA PI would benefit from creating opportunities for learning from the practical experiences of their partners. POs should be encouraged to create spaces for learning during their visits with project teams (and perhaps others interested in gender analysis in the partner institution) to exchange ideas and experiences would strengthen POs’ understanding of what constitutes gender and gender analysis in a particular cultural and political context, how their partners are working to integrate gender issues and approaches into their research at the field level, and the kinds of obstacles (at various levels) that partners encounter in their efforts to integrate gender into this work. POs might also benefit from opportunities to visit projects in the field to gain a first-hand understanding of some of the possible gender dimensions of NRM research and how gender analysis is practically integrated into research projects. While this cannot be done with all projects and during all visits to LAC, planning for one such visit per year, for example, might be feasible. Inviting partners to IDRC to present their research and reflect on the process of integrating gender considerations into their work would also encourage exchange and learning between POs and partners.

7.2 Strengthening MINGA’s Efforts to Integrate Gender into the Project Cycle

The Project Appraisal Process

To help to ensure that project appraisals include a thorough and systematic assessment of the gender dimensions of proposed research, it is recommended that proposal review teams assess and report on: 1) the extent to which the project is seeks to address gender issues relevant to the proposed research theme(s); 2) the proposed methodology for examining these issues in the project; 3) whether or not the project team has the necessary capacity to carry out the proposed gender analysis (e.g. is there social science capacity or gender expertise on the team); and 4) any recommendations made by the reviewers to strengthen the proposal. MINGA’s team leader should work to ensure that appraisals address each of these elements prior to project approval.

Linking Partners to Resources

Three recommendations were made to strengthen MINGA’s approach to linking partners with resources:

- i) While the webpage provides a breadth of relevant information, it could be organized in a more user/partner-friendly way. MINGA might consider, for example, creating a direct link on MINGA’s homepage to information and resources relevant to partners and presenting this information in a more logical, systematic way. Specifically, it would be useful to categorize resources by their type (for example: tools and methods; institutions/programs; training opportunities etc.);
- ii) The MINGA team might benefit from the compilation of an annotated bibliography of different tools and methods available for gender and NRM research. The bibliography could provide an appraisal of each tool (including perhaps references to projects or other research activities where the tool has been used) and could categorize tools by criteria selected by the team (e.g. by type of tool, thematic research area, and so on). This would provide POs with comprehensive and quick access to a broad range of tools that they can then take to partners. Partners could also have direct access to the bibliography if it were made available on MINGA’s gender and NRM webpage.

iii) MINGA might consider re-examining its approach to identifying and linking resource people to their partners. Specifically, the PI might work to create spaces for networking and exchange among researchers, projects, and institutions both weak and strong in gender analysis so that partners have an opportunity to learn about what others are doing in gender and NRM in LAC and to scout out resource people (either specialists in gender and NRM or other like-minded researchers struggling to integrate gender and/or social analysis into their work) to provide mentorship and other kinds of support during the project cycle.

Improving Monitoring and Follow-Up

As discussed in the report, MINGA has not defined a clear strategy for monitoring the mainstreaming process and as a result the team has little knowledge of the outcomes of its initial mainstreaming support (e.g. has gender training led to a better integration of gender analysis into research; are new knowledge and skills shared with colleagues etc.?) or of the emerging needs of partners (e.g. after initial training) as they work to integrate gender into their projects. At this stage of the mainstreaming process, **it is critical that the MINGA team define and systematically implement an appropriate monitoring strategy** to ensure that the PI remains in touch with partners capacity building and resource needs throughout the project cycle, and has the information needed to assess the outcomes of its support, evaluate different approaches (what works, what hasn't, and why), and to document lessons learned (and use these lessons to more effectively target its support vis-à-vis specific partners and more generally with in the region).

The evaluation identified four recommendations to strengthen the monitoring of mainstreaming activities and outcomes at the project level by MINGA POs:

i) The MINGA team might consider developing a small set of monitoring questions or guidelines to assist POs on monitoring visits, in their correspondence with project teams, and in other monitoring activities. POs should be collecting data on the gender issues found to be relevant to the project, how gender has been integrated into the project (through what methods and approaches), the successes, failures, and lessons learned in the project and so on. MINGA's monitoring tool (for monitoring mainstreaming at the program level) could be modified for such a purpose.

ii) MINGA POs should be strongly encouraged to document any and all dialogue related to gender mainstreaming that takes place with their partners during monitoring trips. This will ensure that trip reports capture important information about the progress of partners in their efforts to integrate gender at the project level and provide a mechanism for valued exchange and learning among team members.

iii) Where feasible, POs may also look for opportunities to link projects together at the country or sub-regional level for project-to-project monitoring. Project-to-project monitoring has the potential to ensure more effective and meaningful monitoring at the project level and also creates opportunities for peer learning in gender and NRM among MINGA partners.

iv) In conjunction with regular project level monitoring, the PI also needs to make a commitment to **targeted follow-up** with partners to assess the effectiveness and outcomes of specific support (e.g. training workshops) and to identify and respond to the needs and interests of partners that emerge out of their participation in such activities.

Using Outside Resources

MINGA might consider drawing on resources outside the Centre to support the PI's mainstreaming work in LAC. Using resource people from the region (or elsewhere) for certain

strategic tasks (such as monitoring mainstreaming across selected projects) would reduce the expectations placed on individual POs and help to ensure that these important tasks are carried out as needed.

7.3 Defining Realistic Expectations

Experience from IDRC programs, and indeed other organizations, reveals that the mainstreaming of any new principle or approach demands a great deal of time, commitment and resources. It is a **long-term process** of integrating gender considerations into all aspects, and all levels, of an organization's priorities, programming and procedures. While the MINGA team understands the nature of this process, it has nevertheless set very high expectations for what the program can achieve in the short term – as one MINGA PO expressed with regards to mainstreaming “we set the bar so high that no one can jump over it”.

Some of MINGA's expectations are not realistic given the time and resources available in the PI. MINGA POs – who are the agents of support to partners – tend to have heavy workloads and encounter often-severe time constraints in their work. Moreover, gender mainstreaming represents only one of MINGA's many important programming priorities, each of which demands the time and energy of team members. It is therefore unrealistic for the PI to expect, among other things, that all projects approved since 2000 will effectively integrate gender analysis into its research.

MINGA needs to think more pragmatically about what the PI and individual POs can achieve at the project level. In the long-term the PI will certainly want to ensure that all MINGA-supported projects integrate gender considerations into their work, however this need not be an immediate goal or expectation of MINGA's mainstreaming strategy. Instead of prioritizing coverage (getting some level of gender analysis into all projects), it may be more effective to invest MINGA's time and resources more strategically. At the project level, MINGA could, for example, target its support to the development of regional case studies for the integration of gender analysis into NRM research (to illustrate the process of integrating gender analysis at the field level, to illustrate best practices, and to document lessons learned) and to the development, testing, evaluation and documentation of culturally appropriate research methods for gender analysis in NRM research in LAC.

While this strategy may lighten the responsibilities of individual POs, POs remain central to the mainstreaming process. This report has provided recommendations for strengthening the ability of POs to support partners throughout the project cycle.

7.4 Greater Focus on Institutions

One of the underlying assumptions of MINGA's mainstreaming strategy is that supporting gender-sensitive research at the project level will lead to the mainstreaming of gender in partner institutions. However, experience from MINGA's work in the region suggests that the results of project level research on gender and NRM are not diffusing through institutions and so are not influencing the interests and approaches of other researchers or the policies and programming of institutions. Certainly, building a critical mass of researchers with training and experience in gender and NRM is crucial to promoting change within research institutions in LAC, however to complement these efforts, MINGA might also consider developing a strategy to engage partners at the institutional level.

Specifically, the **PI needs to assess the readiness of institutions to mainstream gender into their procedures, policies and programming.** At the institutional level, do policies and procedures create an incentive for interdisciplinary collaboration and learning; are senior

researchers, department heads and management aware of the importance of gender to NRM research; do social scientists and/or gender specialists, and their departments, have political power (to influence decisions made) at the institutional level? And, at the national and regional levels, is there government support for participatory, gender-sensitive research; is there adequate public funding for academic and research institutions to undertake such research? A better understanding of these and other factors will strengthen MINGA's ability to target its support more effectively in order to encourage gender mainstreaming within partners institutions.

The MERGE⁴ program in LAC has documented several case studies of institutionalizing gender in Latin American research and development institutions, which may provide MINGA with some guidance in this area.

7.5 Assessing Partners Needs

As part of a strategy to assess the readiness of institutions to mainstream gender, MINGA also needs to assess the needs of regional partners. Early in the development of MINGA's mainstreaming strategy the team had considered organizing a needs assessment but, to date, this has not been implemented. A needs assessment would provide the team with critical information about the capacity needs of key partner institutions to implement interdisciplinary gender-sensitive research and to mainstream gender at the institutional level. Given that other ENRM PIs are also committed to mainstreaming gender in LAC, MINGA might consider seeking co-funding from other ENRM PIs (with additional support from IDRC's Gender Unit) to implement this study. The findings of this assessment can be used to strengthen MINGA's capacity building strategy in the region.

7.6 Devolving Responsibility to LAC

As MINGA continues to move forward in its initiative to mainstream gender into the research and the institutions it supports, the PI is strongly encouraged to look for opportunities to devolve responsibility for mainstreaming activities to the region. MINGA is likely to find that LAC institutions and personnel may be better placed (than MINGA program staff) to implement and manage some mainstreaming activities. For example, where feasible, MINGA might attempt to link projects together (at either a country or multi-country level) to facilitate peer learning and mentoring (e.g. pairing stronger and weaker projects teams or institutions) and project-to-project monitoring of gender mainstreaming in MINGA-supported research projects. Linking partners more effectively to existing gender and NRM initiatives in the region may also go a long way towards devolving (at least some) mainstreaming responsibilities to MINGA's partners in the region.

7.7 Evaluation of Mainstreaming at the Project Level

In the near future, the PI is interested to carry out an evaluation of project level activities and experiences related to mainstreaming gender into MINGA-supported research in LAC. At this time, MINGA might focus its monitoring and evaluation activities to identify and assess:

- a. the extent and ways in which MINGA-supported projects are integrating gender issues and approaches into their research activities;
- b. the extent to which partners are drawing on and have benefited from capacity building support and resources offered by the PI and the ways in which this support has strengthened NRM research and its outcomes;
- c. the current/on-going needs of different partners (for capacity building, gender resources, other kinds of support?);

⁴ MERGE: Managing Ecosystems and Resource with Gender Emphasis.

- d. the extent to which gender is being mainstreamed at the institutional level; and
- e. the factors that are facilitating and/or inhibiting gender mainstreaming at both the project and institutional levels.

The overall goal of such an evaluation exercise would be to learn from partners' experiences, perspectives, needs and interests and ensure to that they are used to inform the on-going development of MINGA's mainstreaming strategy in the region. The evaluation could be structured in several ways; one possible approach might be to first send out a questionnaire to all MINGA partners to explore the above issues broadly (and to ensure that at least the majority of MINGA partners have a voice in the evaluation process). Based on the information gathered, MINGA could follow-up with selected partners in greater depth (e.g. developing a small number case studies of the experience of strong and weak projects/institutions in the region).

7.8 Implementing Evaluation Recommendations in the Short, Medium and Long Term

Recommendations	Short term (12 months)	Medium term (2 years)	Long term (3-5 years)
Strengthening capacity in the PI	i) Modify the GMT ii) Restructure the gender contacts database (if desired)	ii) Create new opportunities to learn from partners	
Strengthening MINGA's efforts to integrate gender into the project cycle	i) Implement gender guidelines to assist POs in appraisal process (4 elements) ii) Develop gender monitoring guidelines for POs iii) Reorganize MINGA's gender resources on website	iv) Compile annotated bibliography of gender and NRM tools and methods v) Explore and recruit outside resources for strategic mainstreaming tasks in the region (e.g. selected monitoring)	vi) Create spaces for networking and exchange among MINGA projects, researchers and institutions working in gender and NRM (as a vehicle for linking partners with resource people in gender and NRM)
Defining realistic expectations	i) Implement a team exercise to rethink mainstreaming goals, priorities and objectives for the short, medium and long term	ii) Review team experiences and progress against redefined goals, priorities and objectives set out for the medium and long term and revise as needed/desired	iii) Continue to review team experiences and progress against goals, priorities and objectives set out for the long term and revise as needed/desired

Greater focus on institutions	i) Team members begin thinking in terms of institutions and not just projects in the context of their mainstreaming work	ii) Define and implement a strategy to assess the readiness of institutions to mainstream gender iii) Look for opportunities to partner with other donors to promote institutional strengthening and promote devolution	
Assessing partners needs	i) Begin to identify key regional partners (in collaboration with other ENRM PIs?) to include in a needs assessment	ii) Design and implement a needs assessment (re. gender capacity) of key regional partners (in collaboration with other ENRM PIs?)	
Devolving responsibility to LAC	i) POs begin looking for opportunities to share mainstreaming responsibilities with partners and/or regional resource people	ii) Develop a strategy to devolve (at least some) mainstreaming activities to LAC	iii) MINGA's role vis-à-vis mainstreaming in the region is redefined (ideally, MINGA plays only a facilitating role)
Evaluation of mainstreaming at the project level	i) Begin considering the focus of the evaluation (what does the team want to learn?) ii) Begin identifying projects and partners to participate in the evaluation	iii) Design and implement evaluation iv) Use findings to inform/strengthen MINGA's mainstreaming approach in the region	

Concluding Remarks

This formative evaluation exercise is part of a larger learning process taking place within the PI. It is hoped that the findings presented will stimulate further discussion and debate among the team and with partners and that the issues identified and lessons learned thus far will inform and strengthen MINGA's mainstreaming strategy and approach within the PI and in the region. One of the main messages coming out of this evaluation is that, at this stage in the mainstreaming process, the PI need not ensure that all MINGA projects integrate gender into their research (this can be a longer-term goal), but might focus its efforts on supporting selected research that demonstrates the centrality of gender (and indeed other axes of difference) to natural resource management and conservation in LAC, and that gender-sensitive interdisciplinary research leads to more relevant, equitable and sustainable research outcomes. At the same time, MINGA needs to engage more effectively with partners at the institutional and regional levels to ensure that strategic research on gender and NRM is informing institutional thinking, policies and programming in the region.

Appendix 1: Acronyms

ENRM	Environment and Natural Resource Management
GMT	Gender Monitoring Tool
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
LAC	Latin American and the Caribbean
MERGE	Managing Ecosystems and Resources with Gender Emphasis
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PAD	Project Approval Document
PI	Program Initiative
PO	Program Officer
RSA	Research Support Activity

Appendix 2: Bibliography of Program Documents Reviewed

Hill, C. and S. Paulson. 2001. Workshop on Gender in Environment and Natural Resources Management, IDRC, Ottawa, 7-12 March 2001.

MINGA's Excerpts from Notes from Annual Meeting. February 16-18 2000, Montevideo, Uruguay.

MINGA's Gender Strategy Planning Team Meeting, April 14 2000. Summary of Key Points.

MINGA Gender Strategy. June 2001.

MINGA's gender and NRM resources accessible via: <http://www.idrc.ca/minga>

MINGA's Gender Mainstreaming Monitoring: Report from Round Three. July 2001.

MINGA's Gender Mainstreaming Monitoring: Report from Round Four. February 2002.

MINGA's Gender Mainstreaming Monitoring: Report from Round Five. November 2002.

Wiens, P. 2000a. Gender Mainstreaming in the MINGA PI: From Whence Do We Begin?

Wiens, P. 2000b. Gender Session of the MINGA Team Meetings. February 16-18, 2000.

Wiens, P. 2000c. Gender and Stakeholder Analysis Workshop: Workshop Report. July 2000.

Wiens, P. 2001. MINGA Gender Mainstreaming Monitoring: Report from Round One. January 2001.

Appendix 3: Methodological Observations

Project appraisal documents (PADs) were found to be an imperfect tool for analyzing the extent and ways in which MINGA POs are assessing project proposals for their gender dimensions and engaging with partners at the project development stage to strengthen this component of the proposed research. As is discussed in the report, POs are not adequately documenting the findings of their assessment, their recommendations to strengthen the gender component of the proposal, or steps taken to encourage partners to incorporate these recommendations into the project. In some cases, this is due to the fact that POs' assessments of proposals with respect to gender are not systematic or complete. However, in the case of both strong and weak assessments, the PADs did not capture the full extent of what POs had done both to assess the proposal and to engage with partners to address any recommendations coming out of the assessment. To increase the value and usefulness of PADs to the MINGA program (and to evaluation exercises such as this one) MINGA POs should be encouraged to more thoroughly document the findings of their assessments, the process of engaging partners to strengthen the proposal, and the extent and ways in which the proposal has been strengthened through this engagement.

The evaluation sought to review project proposals to determine the extent and ways in which gender is being integrated into research from the outset of the project. The majority of proposals approved by MINGA since 2000 lack detailed discussion of the gender issues to be explored in the research (and how these are tied to the broader NRM questions to be addressed in the project) and the methodology to be used to examine these issues. This limited the extent to which the evaluation could say anything meaningful about the integration of gender into projects during proposal development.

Interviews with MINGA program staff were used to "fill in the gaps" related to the process of assessing proposals for the gender dimensions and engaging partners at this stage, and to get a sense of the gender-oriented objectives and approaches of particular projects (beyond that which is provided in the approved proposal). This should raise a red flag to the MINGA team however. When documentation fails to capture important information about any activity or process it is stored only in the heads of people. As people come and go from institutions, it is critical that this knowledge be documented to ensure that it is readily available to the team.

Appendix 4: MINGA Projects Reviewed

File No.	Project Type	Title
1994/95		
01637	Research	Sustainable Andean Development Consortium (CONDESAN)
1995/96		
050032	Research	Participative Management of the Paraguay-Parana River Basin, Hidrovia (Regional)
050129	Research	Consortium for Sustainable Development Ucayali (Peru)
1996/97		
03310	Research	Improved Technology Development through Gender Analysis
050210	Research	Sustainable Hillside Agriculture (LAC) II
1997/98		
050269	Research	CG-Sustainable Andean Development Consortium (CONDESAN-III)
03523	Research	Farmer Participatory Research for Sustainable Management of Honduran Hillside - II
050335	RSP	CONDESAN: The First Five Years, Accomplishments and Challenges
050289	Research	Negotiating and Decision-Making for Mining Communities in Latin America
1998/99		
04336	Research	Community Based Coastal Resources Management (Caribbean)
050356	Research	Rural Sustainable Agroindustries
1999/2000		
100052	RSP	Community led development experiences (CIAT) Workshop
100301	Research	Role of Municipalities in Managing Communal Land (FLACSO)
100153	Research	Improving Public Participation in the Mining EIA Process
100155	Research	Tenure, access to and use of land, water and forest resources in Bolivia
2000/01		
100494	Research	Coastal Area Monitoring Project and Laboratory (Camp-Lab III)
100511	RSP	Experiences of local participation and incidence in policies from the sustainable agriculture in Hillside
100836	Research	Doing Stakeholder Analysis
100842	RSP	IDRC Gender Training for ENRM Program Staff
004026	Research	Virtual Information Centre on Water in the Altiplano
100529	RSP	CONDESAN E-Conference
100730	Research	SGP: Fondo Mink'a de Chorlavi (RSP)
100841	Award	Gender Research and Training Support for Minga Partners
2001/02		
100997	Research	Support to Masters' Thesis Research on Gender and NRM
101212	Research	Confronting the Challenge of Gender Equity in Environmental Management in Latin America
101121	RSP	Assessing the Contribution of Small Grants Program to NRM Research
100156	Research	Community-Based Coastal Resources Management (Caribbean) Phase II
101352	RSP	International Conference on Environmental Conflicts and Organizational Change Toward Ecological and Socio-Economic Sustainability
101311	RSP	Literature Review: Managing Environmental Processes Across Admin. Boundaries
101263	RSP	Monitoring and Evaluation: Honduras
101233	Research	Negotiation and Decision-Making for Mining Communities in Potosi, Bolivia
101209	Research	Municipal Forest Management in Latin America
100831	Research	Sustainable Dialogue: Managing Mining Conflicts in Bolivia
100918	RSP	Agroindustries and Outcome Mapping
101147	RSP	Sharing and disseminating field work experiences in Paraguay
101188	RSP	Participatory Watershed Approaches (MANRECUR)

2002/03		
101689	RSP	Andean Water Vision from an Indigenous and Peasant Perspective
101642	RSP	Berkes/Canada Research Chair in Community Based Resource Management
101420	Research	Virtual Information Centre in the Altiplano: Phase II
101367	Research	Conflict and Collaboration in NRM, Phase II
101630	Research	Managing Small Scale Fisheries (Caribbean)
101342	Research	Focused Research on Indigenous Peoples, Extractive Industries and the World Bank Forest Peoples Programme
101762	RSP	Exploring Indigenous Perspectives: Phase II Planning Workshop
101385	Research	Internet Training Program in Community Forestry Management for L.America
101419	RSP	Alternative Policies for Land Access, Tenure and Use (Bolivia)
101423	Research	Regulation of Rights in the Water Law, Bolivia
101492	RSP	Rural Sustainable Agroindustries: Documenting Research Results (CONDESAN)

Appendix 5: List of People Interviewed

Simon Carter	Team Leader	MINGA Program Initiative
Daniel Buckles	Program Officer	MINGA Program Initiative
Gilles Cliche	Program Officer	MINGA Program Initiative
Brian Davy	Program Officer	MINGA Program Initiative
Merle Faminow	Program Officer	MINGA Program Initiative
Gisele Morin-Labatut	Program Officer	MINGA Program Initiative
Lisa Burley	Fmr. Research Officer	MINGA Program Initiative
Phillipa Wiens	Fmr. Gender Specialist	MINGA Program Initiative

Appendix 6: Terms of Reference for the Evaluator

General objective

To conduct an evaluation of the progress to date with regards to gender mainstreaming in the Minga Program Initiative, using the MINGA's evaluation framework, and emphasizing the impact of this process on how Program Officers negotiate and monitor projects. This exercise is intended to assist the Minga PI in assessing the usefulness of its gender monitoring tool, to capture learning and insights, and to inform changes and improvements in the team's gender mainstreaming efforts.

Specifically the consultant shall:

- a) Revise the evaluation matrix and design a workplan in consultation with the Team Leader and Philippa Wiens; this workplan should include interaction with the members of the Minga PI to analyse/interpret the preliminary results of the evaluation;
- b) Track the evolution of the team's work on gender since 2000, and compare the results of this process to the period prior to 2000 by referring to project documentation and other relevant materials;
- c) Make recommendations for changes/improvements/alternative approaches to gender mainstreaming based on lessons learned from the evaluation process;
- d) Make recommendations on appropriate objectives and timing for an evaluation of the impact of Minga gender mainstreaming on partners; and,
- e) Deliver a final report by 30 June 2003.

Appendix 7: Biography of Evaluator

Abra Adamo holds a Masters degree from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Ms. Adamo specializes in gender and natural resource management (and broader development) issues in the developing world, with most of her experience coming from Sub-Saharan Africa. She currently works as a freelance consultant.

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